

13 Hard Truths That Successful Entrepreneurs Live By

Hard truths are the things that most people who have created a comfortable life for themselves don't really look at, and may even go out of their way to ignore. The avoidance of hard truths keeps these people in unacknowledged high stress and limits their productivity. This leads to their not living the lives they are capable of living. In contrast, successful entrepreneurs don't back off from facing up to, and taking on, what is uncomfortable to most. That's why they thrive in environments where most people struggle and fail.

1 You must be empowerable to be empowered. Any straight-line coach will tell you that coaching someone without commitment should be considered malpractice. A great coach or consultant is the catalyst. The entrepreneur is the change agent. This is a critical distinction. You have to bring the goods to the table. Be clear on what you want to create and/or resolve. Get the information you need. Develop and master the required skill sets. And of course, if you have not generated a sufficient commitment to achieve your intended outcome, you are doomed before you even begin. Don't seek out coaches, consultants, mentors, or advisors until you are willing to generate these vital components.

2 Get real about what you think you deserve. What you deserve is what you have right now. The reason that you don't have more is simply because you haven't created more. Some people feel they are entitled to things they have not created. In other words, they feel they are special. While there are special people in life, the people who are successful are the ones who contribute to others' lives in such a way that they are richly compensated. Now there are some people, usually politicians, who will try to convince others that they are entitled or special by the very fact that they happen to be alive. But that's not being special. That's being deluded.

3 Endlessly talking about things that you are not really going to do is exhausting. Unfortunately, this doesn't stop some people from engaging in this activity. The reason a person hasn't done what they are talking about is because they really aren't committed to it. Otherwise, they would be doing it, and getting on with their lives.

4 Whatever you are doing because of "A" just makes "A" more real. This is also called overcompensating for a problem. The effort magnifies the problem, making it more difficult to handle. If you are asked to give a speech and you have no experience in doing so, it makes sense, if time allows, to take a public speaking course, read a couple of books on the subject, and practice your talk several times in front of a few friends. If you put off your speech for several months and insist on taking three speaking courses and reading six books before giving your presentation, this would be grossly overcompensating for your inexperience. Excessive planning and overanalyzing are just unworkable attempts to deal with fear.

5 People who assert that they are content with weak results will usually misrepresent other things as well. No one is ever satisfied or content with mediocrity, no matter how much they may try to convince themselves and others. All they really do is lower their standards over time and settle for a lot less, because this is easy to do. Although they are quite uncomfortable at first, by continuing to tell a self-invented, inaccurate story, they go numb to the actual disempowered reality that they are creating for themselves.

6 The successful entrepreneur utilizes learning experiences for practical application, as opposed to entertainment. Reading a self-help book is an inexpensive learning experience. Attending a seminar is a more expensive, and probably upgraded, learning experience. Most people, unfortunately, utilize these experiences for entertainment and superficial insight, which equates to little if any results. They are pleased with knowing new information that they can discuss with friends and relatives. They usually fail to confront what it would take to actually put into practice what they just learned. Successful entrepreneurs don't play this game. They constantly ask themselves, "How can I actually get this information into practical use?" To the successful entrepreneur, information, no matter how practical and relevant, is useless unless effectively implemented in some fashion.

7 The only thing that you need to know to change your life is that you are the only one who can change your life. Successful entrepreneurs get this distinction and act on it. The unsuccessful are still seeking the next guru, best-selling book, or seminar to provide the last piece of the puzzle so they can solve the ongoing mystery. The successful don't seek. They create.

8 Each time you flinch, your world gets smaller, even if you pretend otherwise. Success is doing something sincerely and wholeheartedly. Success is holding nothing back. Success is being so engaged in what you are doing that you don't have time to worry, complain, or give in to daydreaming or other distractions. Success is doing what's required to get an intended result.

9 Adopting a fake “Zen master act” to hide behind doesn’t work. It also doesn’t fool intelligent people. Creating an impotent definition of success as a defense mechanism to take the easy way out will just keep your wheels spinning. If you are struggling to raise enough money for your retirement, or even to live comfortably, you are not successful. If you don’t earn enough to put your kids through college, you are not successful. If you are not happy, you are not successful. If you are trying to protect your ego by asking the question, “What’s your definition of success?,” you are not successful. If you are pretending to be enlightened and beyond all that “getting specific results stuff,” you are not successful. If you are buying your own excuses, you are not successful. If you are feeling righteous or getting upset while reading this, you are not successful.

10 Power is generating the willingness, ability, and speed to rapidly translate ideas into results. Ideas, no matter how brilliant, stagnate and die, unless you get them out of your head and into the physical universe. Regret for the things that would have made a difference in life, that we failed to act on, is inconsolable.

11 You are not to blame for the life that you were born into, but you are responsible for it. Unfortunately, some people did not have the most caring parents or the most supportive childhood. And very bad things happened. The good news is that it’s over. You don’t have to live there anymore. Life is in you today, and you create your future by how you operate in the present. Responsibility begins with the willingness to acknowledge that you are the cause of your own experience in life. And yes, there were very bad things that happened in the past.

12 People and things will degrade unless continuously created. This is a tough one. It is also an obvious one. Ignore your body, and it gets flabby, weakens, and starts to break down much more rapidly than it would from the normal aging process. Ignore your business, and it will shrink and eventually disappear. Entrepreneurs who thrive constantly create and re-create themselves and their businesses.

13 When you are playing basketball with fourth graders, you don’t have to expand. It’s comfortable and safe. It’s also small, selfish, and shallow. Intentionally playing a small game has its unavoidable consequences. It’s up to us to generate a life worth living. “Waiting to be inspired” is living in reaction. Inspire yourself.

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